UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/23671
3 March 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FURTHER REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM II)

INTRODUCTION

1. As members of the Security Council will recall, the Peace Accords for Angola signed by the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) 1/ provide for the following:

> "Free and fair elections for a new Government will take place following voter registration conducted under the supervision of international election observers, who will remain in Angola until they certify that the elections were free and fair and that the results have been officially announced."

2. On 30 May 1991, the Security Council adopted resolution 696 (1991) and approved the Secretary-General's report of 20 May 1991 2/ with its recommendations for specific action by the United Nations to assist in implementation of the Peace Accords. Paragraph 9 of the report referred, in particular, to the possibility of United Nations involvement in the Angolan electoral process. It was understood, however, that the two sides had not yet decided which international organization or organizations they would request to provide technical advice on certain electoral matters, as well as supervision of the elections by international election observers.

3. As members of the Security Council were informed, on 5 December 1991, the Permanent Representative of Angola delivered to my predecessor two letters dated 8 November 1991, signed by the Minister for External Relations, H.E. Mr. Pedro de Castro Van-Dunem "Loy". One of the letters formally requested the Secretary-General to send United Nations observers in order to follow the Angolan electoral procedure until its completion in the fall of 1992. It specifically emphasized the full commitment of the Angolan Government to establish a multiparty democracy and to consolidate peace in that country. The other letter contained a request for United Nations technical assistance to help the Angolan Government to prepare for and conduct the forthcoming elections.

4. With regard to the second letter, I have already initiated the early provision of technical assistance on electoral matters to Angola. This is being organized and coordinated by the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the framework of their respective programmes, and voluntary contributions are being sought from prospective donors. In January 1992, the Angolan Government, UNDP and the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development signed a project covering such technical assistance. The project provides for assistance to the Angolan authorities through a small team of international and national consultants on election organization, logistics and communications, and emphasizes the coordination of at least part of the bilateral foreign assistance through UNDP.

5. As regards United Nations observation of the elections, the Secretary-General stated on 20 December 1991, at informal consultations of the Security Council, that the following considerations were particularly relevant to the Angolan request.

6. First, the request clearly pertained to a situation with an international dimension with which the Council had been seized since it established UNAVEM II to monitor the cease-fire arrangements agreed to in the Peace Accords. Second, the conduct of internationally supervised elections constituted the central element in the implementation of the Peace Accords. Third, in order to verify the fairness and impartiality of the elections in Angola, the monitoring should cover the entire electoral process, including voter registration. Fourth, the introduction of a United Nations presence in the electoral process had been officially requested by the Angolan Government at an important point in the peace process. And fifth, there was broad public support in Angola for the United Nations to assume such a role. Bearing these considerations in mind, the Secretary-General said, in the informal consultation on 20 December 1991, that he intended to recommend that the Security Council authorize a mission to observe the future elections in Angola. But first, it was his intention to send a preliminary survey team to Luanda to prepare a comprehensive report on such a mission. On the basis of that report he would present his recommendations for the consideration of the Security Council.

7. Having consulted President dos Santos as well as Mr. Jonas Savimbi, President of UNITA, I addressed a letter on 6 February 1992 to the President of the Security Council 3/ informing the Council of my decision to appoint Miss Margaret Joan Anstee, then Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna, to the post of my Special Representative for Angola, with effect from 7 February. The members of the Council welcomed this decision. 4/ The Special Representative is to coordinate the current and projected activities of the United Nations in connection with the Angola Peace Accords. She is in overall charge of these activities and is also the Chief of UNAVEM II. I also indicated my intention to recommend that, in addition to its existing military observers, police monitors and civilian staff, UNAVEM II should be enlarged to include an Electoral Division. It is intended to establish in March 1992 an office of the Special Representative in Luanda, with a staff of international

civil servants, to assist my Special Representative in coordinating all United Nations activities related to the Angolan peace process.

8. I asked my Special Representative to make an immediate visit to Angola in order to assess developments in the peace process and to report to me with recommendations concerning the United Nations role in observing the forthcoming elections. Miss Anstee, accompanied by a small team, visited Angola from 17 to 20 February 1992. She was briefed by the Chief Military Observer of UNAVEM II and his staff and had extensive discussions with the heads of the government and UNITA delegations to the Joint Political-Military Commission (CCPM), as well as with the heads of the observer delegations to the CCPM (Portugal, Russian Federation and United States of America), the Minister for the Administration of the Territory who is currently in charge of preparations for the elections, and the UNDP Resident Representative and the representatives of several United Nations agencies. She was received by Mr. Savimbi, President of UNITA. The Special Representative also attended a CCPM meeting on 20 February 1992, as well as a conference, organized by the Ministry for the Administration of the Territory, bringing together donor countries that have indicated their willingness to provide some financial and material assistance for the electoral process. In addition to these consultations in Luanda, she visited the province of Uije to see the situation in the FAPLA assembly area at Negage and in the FALA assembly area at Quipedro.

I. THE CURRENT STATE OF THE PEACE PROCESS

9. There are several positive elements in the report on the current state of the peace process that my Special Representative presented to me following her visit to Angola. But there are also a number of matters which give cause for concern.

10. Nine months after the signing of the Peace Accords, a great deal has been achieved and the Angolan peace process is generally developing along the lines of the Accords, although there have been delays and gaps in the completion of some of the major tasks. Despite some incidents, there has been no major violation of the cease-fire, an outstanding achievement for which both the Government and UNITA deserve congratulation after 16 years of civil war. Both parties have repeatedly reaffirmed their commitment to the non-renewal of hostilities. The joint commissions composed of the Government, UNITA and the three observers (Portugal, Russian Federation and United States), with the participation of UNAVEM II, as well as the Government/UNITA monitoring groups, continue to function. The first phase of the training of the new armed forces (half of whose strength will come from the Government's forces and half from UNITA) was completed in February 1992.

11. However, after initial progress in the implementation of the Peace Accords, work on most of the deadlines provided for in the Lisbon documents or in the subsequent undertakings is well behind schedule. The most worrying matter concerns the confinement of troops in the 48 designated assembly

areas. As at 26 February 1992, UNITA had confined 93 per cent of the troops it is supposed to assemble, while the percentage of government troops accounted for by UNAVEM II had dropped to 54 per cent of the already revised projected total. Despite efforts under a special programme, launched in September 1991 by the United Nations, to assist the soldiers and their dependants in assembly areas, the numbers of FAPLA forces in the assembly areas have decreased substantially, as a consequence of the scarcity of food, poor living conditions, lack of pay and lack of leadership. There is unrest in many FAPLA assembly areas and this only adds to the precarious security situation in many parts of the country. On 20 February, CCPM, in the presence of my Special Representative, took a decision on a precise timetable for demobilization, which aims to complete the process at the end of July 1992. However, the practical steps to implement this plan have yet to be finalized. Government and UNITA delegations are also working on a plan to collect and store all weapons, from both inside and outside the assembly areas, in regional armouries.

12. After protracted delays, the Government and UNITA have designated their members for the joint police monitoring teams whose task is to monitor the neutrality of the national police in Angola's 18 provinces. Rules of procedure for the monitoring teams have been developed in the Political Commission and approved by CCPM. However, joint police monitoring has still not effectively started in many areas because of difficulties that both the Government and UNITA have encountered in providing transport, communications and office space for the teams.

13. In spite of these difficulties and delays, UNAVEM II military and police observers have continued to verify and assist in the implementation of the cease-fire arrangements, as well as the arrangements agreed by the two Angolan parties for monitoring the national police.

14. The Peace Accords stipulated that the Government's administration should be extended to the areas that were beyond the range of its authority. This process got under way in November 1991 but, notwithstanding renewed efforts by CCPM, the Government has not yet been able to extend its administration to a number of municipalities controlled by UNITA. This factor is still hampering another related element in the Peace Accords, which calls for the free circulation of people and goods throughout Angola. It could also impede the early stages of the electoral process. Apart from the political problems, the extension of central administration has been made difficult by the fact that many bridges are destroyed and many roads are still mined. It is important that this problem should be resolved soon.

15. Under the Peace Accords, all civilian and military prisoners held by the Government and UNITA have to be released. At the end of February 1992, the Government had freed 904 prisoners registered with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), while UNITA had released 3,043 registered prisoners. Both parties have stated that they have completed the first phase of the release of prisoners, but they still have outstanding claims against each other, action on which will constitute the second phase.

16. Apart from the Movimento Popular para a Libertaçao de Angola (MPLA) and UNITA, there are about 30 political parties and organizations established or emerging in Angola. The Government has conducted bilateral consultations with the political parties and forces and has also organized a multiparty conference to discuss matters including the draft electoral law, the law on the formation of political parties, the exact date for the elections, the simultaneity of the presidential and legislative elections and changes to the Constitution. UNITA did not participate in the multiparty conference but the Government subsequently discussed these matters with it separately, and a comprehensive plan for organizing the elections is emerging. However, specific preparations for these first free elections, which present a daunting challenge to the Angolan people, have barely begun. There are many logistical, administrative and financial problems that must be overcome for elections to be held in September 1992 as provided in the Peace Accords. Both parties made clear to my Special Representative their high hopes and expectations for major United Nations assistance in both organizing and supervising the elections.

17. As indicated in my letter of 6 February 1992 to the President of the Security Council, 3/ I asked my Special Representative to give priority to finalizing a plan for the United Nations to observe the elections. She has accordingly prepared the plan described below.

II. OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR UNITED NATIONS OBSERVATION OF THE ELECTIONS AND THE ENLARGEMENT OF UNAVEM II

Main assumptions

18. The United Nations electoral mission will have the explicit agreement of the two parties to the Peace Accords, who will confirm their understanding and acceptance of the mission's terms of reference and mandate.

19. The mission will be an operation limited in scale, similar in approach to the United Nations Observer Mission for the Verification of the Elections in Nicaragua (ONUVEN) and the United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of the Elections in Haiti (ONUVEH).

20. The mission will rely on the logistic and communications systems established by UNAVEM II and by United Nations agencies operating in Angola to the maximum extent possible and in an integrated manner.

21. The legislative and presidential elections will be held simultaneously in the second half of September 1992.

Terms of reference

22. The terms of reference would be as follows:

(a) To verify the impartiality of the electoral authorities in all aspects and stages of the electoral process;

(b) To verify that political parties and forces, as well as individuals and groups, enjoy complete freedom of organization, movement, assembly and expression, without hindrance or intimidation;

(c) To verify that all political parties and forces have access to State radio and television, and that there is fairness in the allocation of both the timing and the length of broadcasts. The use of other public resources for electoral purposes would also be the subject of observation and possible recommendations by the electoral mission;

(d) To verify that the electoral rolls are properly drawn, and that qualified voters are not denied registration and the right to vote;

(e) To report to the electoral authorities on complaints, irregularities and interferences reported or observed and, if necessary, to request the electoral authorities to take action to resolve and rectify such complaints, irregularities and interferences;

(f) To observe all activities related to the registration of voters, the organization of the poll, the electoral campaign, the poll itself and the counting, computation and announcement of the results.

Operational plan

23. As noted in paragraph 7 above, it is intended to establish an office of the Special Representative in Luanda in the month of March, with a staff of 18 international civil servants and the requisite local staff, to coordinate all United Nations activities related to the Angolan peace process.

24. UNAVEM II would be enlarged to include an Electoral Division, headed by a Chief Electoral Officer with five international and the requisite local staff at headquarters in Luanda.

25. Offices of the Electoral Division would be established in the capitals of all 18 provinces in Angola. These offices would be supervised by six regional electoral offices, which would be colocated with the regional teams of the military component of UNAVEM II. A total of 98 international staff and the requisite number of local staff would be required for the regional and provincial offices. Work on identifying and preparing the provincial offices would have to begin in March. With a national average of five United Nations electoral observers per province, the more heavily populated provinces would receive more staff than the more sparsely populated ones. The provincial teams would be colocated with existing UNAVEM military and police observers in all 18 provinces, and would use existing UNAVEM communications facilities. More vehicles and accommodation would be required. Additional facilities would also have to be established to support additional incoming electoral staff in September 1992.

26. The Electoral Division headquarters in Luanda would direct and coordinate the activities of the regional and provincial teams and would supervise all

action at the national level concerning the electoral process. The headquarters, regional and provincial staff would monitor and verify implementation of all elements in the electoral law, the law on the formation of political parties and the code of conduct which it is hoped will be agreed between the parties. The regional and provincial teams would send regular reports to Luanda headquarters concerning political and electoral developments in their areas, as well as on their own activities, and there would be periodic reports to the Security Council.

27. Three main phases of the electoral process are foreseen: the registration of voters (possibly starting in April 1992 and lasting until July or August); the electoral campaign (lasting for several weeks before the poll); and the poll itself (lasting for one or more days in the second half of September).

28. The UNAVEM electoral observers, during all three phases, would monitor and evaluate the operations and impartiality of the electoral authorities at all levels. UNAVEM would similarly evaluate the fairness of all significant decisions of the electoral authorities and would investigate disputed actions taken by them. The provincial teams would have regular contact with political parties and social organizations, and would visit municipalities and villages throughout the country; they would monitor registration by making random visits to key centres; they would observe important political rallies and other political activities; and they would verify compliance by all parties with the electoral law and with the code of conduct. The mechanisms through which broadcasting time was allotted to the different parties would also be observed and the content of information broadcasts and the fairness of tariffs would be analysed. UNAVEM would also evaluate complaints received about the use of public resources as well as making its own observations. These activities would make an important contribution to confidence-building and would be accompanied by public information programmes. It is expected that at least 95 per cent of the municipalities and main population centres would be visited at least once by UNAVEM teams and, for the more populated areas, there would be several visits.

29. A network would be created to receive complaints by political parties, analyse their relevance and transmit them to the electoral authorities and appropriate parties. The actions taken in relation to situations that might significantly affect the fairness of the elections would be carefully followed. A data bank at Luanda headquarters would incorporate the complaints received and periodic analyses of the evolution of the situation would be produced.

30. During the polling itself, the Electoral Division would field about 200 observation teams of two people each, i.e. a total of 400 people. These teams would have full access to monitor all stages of the poll, and would develop a projection of results for internal purposes. These 400 personnel would consist of the approximately 100 staff mentioned in paragraphs 24 and 25 above; about 100 additional observers to be selected from UNDP and other United Nations agency personnel in Angola, plus volunteers from selected

non-governmental organizations (NGOs); about 100 additional observers from the Secretariat; and a further 100 contributed by member States.

31. It should be emphasized that this proposed operational plan and the preliminary cost estimates, which will be presented as an addendum to the present report are very modest for observing and verifying the first-ever elections in Angola, especially when compared with the costs currently projected for other recently initiated United Nations operations. Given the vast size of Angola, its difficult terrain and its degraded physical and administrative infrastructure, the allocation of an average of only five observers to each province (i.e. approximately one United Nations observer per 100,000 inhabitants) would obviously allow for only sample observation.

32. There are at present many political, administrative and logistical imponderables and uncertainties, which could radically change the direction of the process. These factors argue in favour of making maximum use of the resources that UNAVEM II, UNDP and other United Nations agencies already have in Angola. The existing mandated strength of 350 United Nations military observers and 90 United Nations police observers, and existing support services, should be maintained. The requirements for additional administrative support staff will be detailed in the budget that I will present to the General Assembly and will be reflected in the preliminary cost estimates referred to above. Given the present uncertainties, further needs for personnel and equipment may emerge, and I will address the appropriate bodies again if the need should arise.

33. The current unsettled security situation in many areas of the country may make it necessary to provide UNAVEM II with security services for its election operation. These could be obtained on a contract basis from international security firms currently operating in Angola, which would be less expensive than deploying United Nations guards or additional military or police personnel from the troop-contributing countries for this task.

III. OBSERVATIONS

34. Much has been achieved in implementation of the Angolan peace process, but there remains much to be done to ensure that these gains are followed through to completion. The timetable for implementation of the Accords cannot be delayed further. All Angolan parties and forces must join together urgently in making renewed commitments to realistic and workable timetables and methods for implementing the Peace Accords until achievement of the goal: free and fair elections in September 1992.

35. There is no reason to delay the demobilization of troops any longer. They should be able to begin returning to civilian life through an organized programme. Clarifications must be exchanged between the parties about their troops outside the assembly areas, so that they can be accounted for and monitored, as CCPM agreed on 30 January 1992. Establishment of a unified civilian police force, as well as the formation of joint military police units

within the new national army, are high priorities. Every effort should be made to extend the Government's administration and to restore security throughout the country so that normal economic, social and political activities can be carried out without fear or intimidation. These are priority tasks that must be accomplished rapidly to ensure the success of the electoral process.

36. Moreover, there should be early national consensus on the essential elements for organizing the elections. These include agreement on the date for the elections and simultaneity of the legislative and presidential elections; the establishment of a workable National Electoral Council; the minimum voting age; and a comprehensive, detailed budget allocated by the Government.

37. As my Special Representative repeatedly emphasized during her visit, the Angolan elections are essentially a national, sovereign affair. The United Nations role is to observe and verify the elections, not to organize them. The Government must be seen clearly to be taking charge of their organization, especially concerning logistics. The Government and UNITA should make available as soon as possible all available resources, including accommodation, vehicles, aircraft, communications equipment and personnel. It is, however, unlikely that national resources, even if fully mobilized, will be adequate for this task and urgent supplements from the international community and bilateral donors are certain to be needed. It is also necessary that the registration of voters be practical and workable and not aim for a level of sophistication that is likely to be expensive, unnecessary and almost certainly unattainable, given the conditions existing in Angola. It is, moreover, essential that a strict schedule for the electoral process be maintained so that the elections can be held in September 1992. Unless the necessary political, legal, organizational and budgetary prerequisites are fulfilled very soon, the effectiveness of United Nations electoral observation as well as voter registration could be put in question.

38. While emphasizing the responsibility that lies with the Government, and with the Angolan political parties, to take now the steps necessary to ensure free and fair elections in September, I believe that the United Nations should make every possible effort, within the limits of its mandate and resources, to assist the process, in accordance with the request received from the Angolan Government. Accordingly, having considered the report that my Special Representative presented to me on her return from Angola, I recommend to the Security Council that UNAVEM's mandate, strength and composition be enlarged in the manner described above.

39. This new role for the United Nations in Angola, if approved by the Security Council, will be a daunting challenge, given the devastated condition of the country, the almost total lack of the infrastructure that will be necessary for the electoral process, and the major political, logistical and administrative uncertainties now evident. The efforts that will have to be undertaken, above all by the Angolan people themselves, in the organization of their first free and fair elections, which are an essential precondition for

peace and political stability, deserve the support not only of the United Nations, but also of all those concerned with the future of Angola.

Notes

1/ See S/22609.

2/ S/22627.

3/ S/23556.

4/ S/23557.